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Trend unemployment rate steady at 5.3%

Australia's trend unemployment rate remained steady at 5.3 per cent in September 2019, according to the latest information released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

"All of Australia's key trend measures remained steady in September 2019, with the unemployment rate at 5.3 per cent and the participation rate at 66.2 per cent." said ABS Chief Economist Bruce Hockman.

Employment and hours

In September 2019, trend monthly employment increased by around 20,200 people. Full-time employment increased by about 9,000 people and part-time employment increased by about 11,300 people.

Over the past year, trend employment increased by about 300,000 people (2.4 per cent), which continued to be above the average annual growth over the past 20 years (2.0 per cent). Full-time employment increased by 2.1 per cent and part-time employment increased by 2.9 per cent over the past year.

The trend monthly hours worked increased by 0.1 per cent in September 2019 and by 1.8 per cent over the past year. This was slightly above the 20 year average year-on-year growth of 1.7 per cent.

Annual Employment Change Over 20 Years (%)



Underemployment and underutilisation

The trend monthly underemployment rate remained steady at 8.4 per cent in September 2019, an increase of 0.1 percentage points over the past year. The trend monthly underutilisation rate remained steady at 13.7 per cent, an increase of 0.2 percentage points over the past year.

States and territories trend unemployment rate

The monthly trend unemployment rate remained steady in half of the states and territories in September 2019. Unemployment rate changes occurred in the Northern Territory (up 0.2 percentage points), Queensland and South Australia (up 0.1 percentage points) and Western Australia (down 0.1 percentage points).

Over the year, unemployment rates fell in Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory, and increased in Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania and the Northern Territory.

Seasonally adjusted data

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased by less than 0.1 percentage points to 5.2 per cent in September 2019, while the underemployment rate decreased by 0.2 percentage points to 8.3 per cent. The seasonally adjusted participation rate decreased by less than 0.1 percentage points to 66.1 per cent, and the number of people employed increased by an estimated 14,700.

The net movement of employed in both trend and seasonally adjusted terms is underpinned by around 300,000 people entering and leaving employment in the month.

More details are in the September 2019 issue of Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0). In addition, further information, including regional labour market information, can be found in the upcoming September 2019 issue of Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001), due for release on 24 October 2019.

These publications are available for free download (after release) from the ABS website: <https://www.abs.gov.au>.

Media note:

- When reporting ABS data, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) must be attributed as the source.
- For media requests and interviews, contact the ABS Media Team on 1300 175 070 or media@abs.gov.au (8.30am - 5pm Monday - Friday AEDT).
- The ABS produces trend estimates to provide a more reliable indicator of the underlying behaviour of the Labour Force series. Trend estimates were introduced into the Labour Force series in the mid 1980s and are available back to February 1978. Trend estimates are considered the best indicators of the underlying behaviour in the labour market. See paragraphs 29 to 38 of the Explanatory Notes in Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0).
- Labour Force Survey data is complemented by other ABS measures to build a comprehensive picture of the labour market.
- Jobs in Australia (cat. no. 6160.0) data provides insights into all jobs held throughout the year.
- Labour Accounts (cat. no. 6150.0.55.003) data provides the number of filled jobs at a point-in-time each quarter, while Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0) data measures the number of people employed each month.
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